The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. XVI. BOSTON, JUNE, 1908. No. 12.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY: 50 cents a year. Single copy, 5 cents.

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as second class mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

CONTENTS OF NO. 12.

COULDST THOU NOT WATCH ONE HOUR? 145
THE CHANGING OF CROSSES INTO CROWNS, II. . 145
THE STILL HOUR 146
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB 147
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL: TEACHING CHILDREN TO OBEY 148
NATURAL HISTORY: MACK, THE PARROT, IX. . . 150
A CAT STORY 151
THE HOME OF SHAKESPEARE 152
LETTERS OF A SISTER 153
THE HOUSEHOLD: A LADY'S ACCOUNT BOOKS . . 154
THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN 155
IMPORTANT NOTICES 156

COULDST THOU NOT WATCH ONE HOUR?

Thy night is dark—behold the shade was deeper
In the old garden of Gethsemane,
When that calm voice awoke the weary sleeper,—
Couldst thou not watch one hour alone with me?

O, thou so weary of thy self-denials
And so impatient of thy little cross,
Is it so hard to bear thy daily trials,
To count all earthly things a gainful loss?

What if thou *always* suffer tribulation,
And if thy Christian warfare *never* cease?
The gaining of the quiet habitation
Shall gather thee to everlasting peace.

But here we all must suffer, walking lonely
The path that Jesus once himself hath gone;
Watch thou in patience through this hour only,
This one dark hour before the eternal dawn.

The captive's oar may pause upon the galley,
The soldier sleep beneath his plumed crest,
And peace may fold her wing o'er hill and valley,
But thou, O Christian, must not take thy rest.

In meek obedience to the heavenly Teacher,
Thy weary soul can only find its peace,
Seeking no aid from any human creature;
Looking to God alone for his release.

And he will come in his own time and power,
To set his earnest-hearted children free;
Watch only through this dark and painful hour,
And the bright morning yet will break for thee.

—*Hymns of the Ages.*

THE CHANGING OF CROSSES INTO CROWNS.

II.

Take some of these daily crosses, and see how this works out.

There is the cross of *Industry.* The fundamental requirement of man in this world is to work,—to do something, and to do it well. Industry is not the highest or most beautiful quality. The foundation of a building is not its handsomest part; but this is the fundamental requisite of a sound human life,—diligence, industry! And is it not a cross,—to have to keep on at your tasks when pleasure is inviting you, or when you do not feel quite well? There was pathos behind the quaint humor of what a tired Martha said to me one day, "I don't know what is the matter with me," she said. "I can sleep well, and I can eat well, but, when it comes to *work,* my heart fails me!" Have you never felt like that? And is it not a cross, then, to have all the daily tasks to face, and to have to go on just the same? And Christianity only makes industry more imperative. The world, in a way, forces you to work. Christianity demands that you work as well as possible. Put your very best into it. Or it may be that the world does not insist that you shall work. You have all that you need, and the world would let you simply enjoy yourself. But Christianity calls you still to work,—to put in some useful stroke of work into this world. If you do not need to work for yourself, it asks you to work for others,—work in the city, work for society, work for

this or that good cause. It calls you to a life of large, earnest activity. Is that never a cross? To have to turn out to a meeting when you would sooner sit by the fire? To have to stay in town for a committee when you would like to take the early train home? Yes, industry begins as a cross. But endure it faithfully; meet its requirement; accustom yourself to work with long steady stroke; hold yourself to it,—and, then, does it continue to be a cross, to the end? No! The industry that at first was a pain, gradually becomes a happiness. It is only slack, half-hearted labor that is permanently a trouble. Good work, done worthily, though it begins as a trouble, grows into a satisfaction, a skill, a joy. It brings gradually the sense of power. "Something attempted, something done," brings its own peculiar joy. So the cross of industry gradually changes into the crown of happy activity.

Take the cross of *Truth*. I think truth comes next to industry among the basal qualities of life. Even the world requires a certain amount of truth,—that one avoid gross dishonesty and downright falsehood. Even that is sometimes a cross. But Christianity asks more than that,—a full, clear, sincere truthfulness. Christianity bids us put away even the small lies which the world winks at and the small hypocrisies which pass muster in society, but which mar the simplicity of life and destroy man's trust in men. Christianity requires of us a frank manly sincerity; that we do not try to seem better than we are; that we do not try—a subtler temptation still—to seem worse than we are, pretending to take some poor low tone of those we may be with, when in our hearts we believe in better things. I tell you, the Christian requirement of truth in life is one of the daily crosses. But does it continue to be a cross always? Not if you take it up and carry it manfully and perseveringly. If we are faithful to the truth and hold to it, it will bless us. The truth is a mighty deliverance from difficulty and anxiety. That is a good word some one has,—that "lying is like trying to hide in a fog. If you move about, you are in danger of bumping up against the truth, and, as soon as the fog blows off, you are lost anyhow!" There is no such trouble with the truth. "The truth shall make you free." No fact, no new development of facts, can hurt you or undo you if you are true. Truth, when you have once got over the fear of it, is one of the grandest things in life. It brings a quiet beauty of simplicity and a mighty strength of fearlessness, which gradually become a very "crown of life." Thus the cross of truth becomes the crown of fearless simplicity.

Again there is the cross of *Patience*,—patience in suffering, and that other patience, in work,—quiet persistence. It is hard to be patient in sickness,—not fretful, not selfish, quietly letting the sickness have its time. It is hard to be patient in disappointment and trouble,—not cast down, steadily holding on in the right way. But perhaps in these eager, hurrying days the hardest cross of patience is patience in action. There is such a rush for success. Is it no cross to abide in quiet, useful ways of business when men about you seem to be growing rich in a flash, by speculation? Is it no cross to do some slow, solid work, when some flimsy superficiality would pass muster? And so even in higher things. Men want to accomplish their reforms at a stroke. This is the trouble with all who are striving for any good work in the world. It is against this that Christ calls us to take up the daily cross of patience; not to be too eager for quick results; to do right and hold on, on that line; to choose the solidest work rather than that which looks as if it would be the quickest, and to abide in it unmoved by what the weak call "the force of circumstances." Yes! all this is a cross. But be patient; have faith in God and right; keep steadily on; and, by and by, out of this very trial shall come its special blessing. Your doing will gain a massive strength; what you do will stand; and you will stand in quiet, steadfast power. And is not this a crown upon the life? The cross of patience becomes the crown of steadfastness. *Brooke Herford.*

THE STILL HOUR.

An impulse large and beautiful and free
Awoke and stirred in me.
When I would question it whence it had
come,
Behold I found it dumb.
It was a word beyond all word of mine,
A sign beyond all sign,
Love beyond love,— the Paraclete divine.

—*Hannah Parker Kimball.*

Resting always in His presence, like a little child, or even a beggar, who, knowing nothing is due to him, still asks, loves, and awaits, feeling sure that hour by hour, in proportion to our need, God will provide all that is needful, and even over and above what is absolutely necessary. Live peacefully under the protection of Divine Providence: the

more you feel your insignificance, weakness, sickness, misery, the more right you have to the pity and love of God.

Only *pray* fervently; let your prayer be thoughtful and reverent, sweet, and full of hope. The poor have nothing left to them but *prayer;* but that prayer, so humble, so pleading, ascends to God, and is listened to with Fatherly love!

Do not have a number of varied prayers, but let the "Our Father" be ever on your lips and in your heart.

Love to repeat to God the prayer that Christ himself has taught, and for his sake is always accepted.

Each morning hold yourself in readiness to obey all his commands in the way he wills and with the means he appoints.

The command may not always come *direct* from the Master. It would be too sweet to hear only God's voice; but he sends it by means of his ambassadors: these go by the names of *superiors, equals, inferiors,* sometimes *enemies.*

Each has received the mission (without knowing it) to make you holy, one by subduing your independence, another by crushing your pride, a third by spurring your slothfulness.

They will, though fulfilling God's command, do it each in his own way, sometimes roughly, sometimes maliciously, sometimes in a way hard to bear. . . . What does it matter, so long as you feel that all you do, all you suffer, is the will of God?

Do your duty as well as you can, as you understand it, as it is given to you. Say sometimes to God, "My Master, art thou satisfied with me?" and then, in spite of *ennui,* fatigue, repugnance, go on with it faithfully to the end.

Then, whether praise or blame be yours, you will, good, faithful servant, at least have peace.—*Gold Dust.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.*]

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

OFFERS.

Will any one who would like to receive "The Bybury Book," by Mrs. Abby Morton Diaz, please address Miss Susan A. Whiting, 11 Washington Street, Newton, Mass.?

The following books are offered to any minister who may like them. Address Miss L. F. Young, 5 Central Street, Winchester, Mass.: "Livermore's Commentaries, Gospel I.–II., Romans and Acts"; "The New Testament," translated from the Greek text of Tischendorf, by George R. Noyes, D.D.; "The Light of Asia," by Edwin Arnold.

REQUESTS.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. Harrington's Spelling-book is asked for by Mrs. W. F. Galloway, Dover, North Carolina.

2. It has been some time since I last wrote to the *Cheerful Letter.* As I have not received much reading for some time, will come again asking for papers and books. Would like "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "Ten Nights in a Bar-Room," "Wooed and Married," "Queen Victoria," and "The Prince Consort," and some good religious books. Please address all my mail to Sandy Ridge in place of Campbell, North Carolina. Hope to be remembered the 21st of May with cheering letters, as that is my birthday. Mrs. H. W. Shelton, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina.

3. Mrs. C. R. Gannaway, Sandidges, Amherst County, Virginia, a member for several years, has now moved into this small place, and asks for reading for herself and children. She has one daughter, sixteen, and three sons younger. They live ten miles from any railroad, and twenty-five miles from town. Any reading will be most welcome; also music for the daughter.

4. Ruby Brown, Verano, Virginia, is anxious to receive White's "Complete Arithmetic."

5. Mrs. Martha Parkhill, R. F. D. No. 2, Muenster, Texas, asks for little books for a boy who has just learned his letters.

6. C. B. Frazelle, Swansboro, North Carolina, asks for "The Crisis," "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come," "The House behind the Cedars," "The Spark in the

Clod," by Sunderland, or any good work on Evolution. Second-hand copies will be acceptable.

7. Mrs. A. Pace, Lancaster, Texas, Route 2, asks for magazines, and her cousin, Mrs. S. A. Pace, same address, will be glad of any reading, as it has been a long time since she has received any.

8. Mrs. M. E. Oades, 422 Third Street, Olympia, Wash., asks for the March, 1908, *Human Life*, and any number of *Smith's Magazine*.

9. Mrs. Martha W. Guy and her husband have both been ill, but grateful for the kindness shown them, and will be very thankful for any reading. Address Mrs. Martha W. Guy, P.O. Box 5, Germantown, Kentucky.

10. I would be thankful for reading for myself and family. Anything new or old that is suitable for young people will be gladly received. All reading will be passed on. Many thanks for what I have received in the past. (Mrs.) Ada V. Wann, R. R. No. 2, Waxahachie, Texas.

11. Will the person sending the *Cheerful Letter* to Mrs. D. B. Cheatwood please notice her address is Glen Alum, West Virginia, instead of Agricola, Virginia?

12. Our crying need is always more teachers for the Home Study Work, and the need is still great for those who can make it possible to teach grammar, history, spelling, and writing. Seventeen young people are now on the waiting list. Will not some of our workers take one or more of these pupils, and so help our chairman, Mrs. Annie F. Hudson, 2 Maple Place, Jamaica Plain, Mass.?

13. Rev. C. F. Dykeman, Dakota, Minnesota, would like to receive Palfrey's History of New England.

14. Rev. W. A. Alleyn, Burlington, Wisconsin, and Mrs. L. E. Abbott-Holt, Landrum, South Carolina, R. D. 2, would be glad to receive the *American Antiquarian* and *Oriental Journal*, either current numbers or a file of recent years.

The highest ideal which man can attain of his own powers is that which he is destined to attain. Whatever the soul knows how to seek, it cannot fail to attain. This is the Law and the Prophets.—*Margaret Fuller.*

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

TEACHING CHILDREN TO OBEY.

Mary Osborne liked very much to make acquaintance with such children as Johnny,* who had not been trained to obey the authority set over them, because it gave her pleasure to train them herself to this obedience. If she heard of any child in the town that was particularly disobedient, wilful, and stubborn, that would be the very boy that she would have liked to invite to come and play in the yard and garden at her father's house, while she was herself at work on the piazza or engaged in taking care of her flowers, in order that she might have his disobedience, wilfulness, and obstinacy to practise upon, and see what she could do toward correcting these faults.

She knew very well before she invited Johnny to come and play at her house that he never would obey his mother's commands when they thwarted his inclinations in any way, and she was particularly desirous to have him come and see her from time to time, in order to have the pleasure of trying to see whether she could make him obey *her*.

For a day or two after the affair related in the last chapter, when Johnny was sent home on account of his refusing to do what Mary Osborne directed him, he felt somewhat afraid to see her again, expecting that she would give him a lecture for his disobedience. At one time, in fact, when he saw her coming, he ran off round the barn to hide. The next day, however, he felt less afraid, and so he waited at the gate, when he saw Mary Osborne coming, though he looked rather abashed and shy. He was wondering whether she had forgotten his offence or not, and, if she had not, whether she would have anything to say about it.

Mary Osborne was walking along a little terrace which led to a sort of open summer-house on the corner of a wall, from which she could look over to the gate where Johnny was standing. Johnny's fears were all at once allayed as soon as she spoke, for she accosted him with,—

"Ah! Johnny, I was looking for you. I am going down to my willow seat to read a little while, and I want you to go with me to take care of me. You can take your fishing line with you if you please, and fish in the brook while I am reading."

Johnny was of course delighted with this proposal.

So he went in to obtain his mother's permission, and to get his fishing tackle,

* See previous numbers.

and soon afterward he and Mary Osborne were walking along together by a winding road which led to the pond.

"Now, Miss Osborne," said Johnny, "you can tell me a story as we are walking along."

"Very well," said Mary, "I will. Once there was a general making a campaign in the enemy's country. One day he came to the door of his tent, and looked about to find some one to send away. He saw a captain sitting on a camp-stool reading a newspaper. His horse was picketed near him."

"What does that mean?" asked Tommy.

"Fastened to a little stake driven into the ground," replied Mary Osborne. "Such little stakes are called pickets."

Some persons, in talking to children, try to use only such words as they can understand. But Mary Osborne always brought into her stories a certain number of new and strange words, taking care, however, to bring them in in such a connection as to excite the children's curiosity, and lead them to ask for the meaning of them.

"The general ordered the captain," said Mary Osborne, "to mount his horse and ride to the top of a certain hill and reconnoitre."

"What is that?" asked Johnny.

"To look through a spy-glass all about," said Mary Osborne, "and see if he could discover the enemy, and, if he could, see if he could find out what they were doing.

"When the general had given his order, he went back into his tent, and the captain went on reading his newspaper."

"And would not go to reconnoitre?" asked Johnny.

"No," rejoined Mary Osborne. "After a time the general came out again, and, when he found the captain had not obeyed him, he called him to account."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Johnny.

"I mean he asked him why he had not obeyed the command," replied Mary Osborne. "And what do you think the captain said?"

"I don't know," said Johnny. "What was it? Tell me."

"He said he did not like to go, for he wanted to stay where he was and read his newspaper. Do you think that was a good excuse?"

"No, indeed," said Johnny. "What did the general do?"

"He ordered five soldiers to come and seize the captain and carry him off to prison.

"A few days after this the general came to the door of his tent, and, after talking with some of his officers a few minutes, he said that he had a great mind to send out a foraging party that night."

"What is that?" asked Johnny.

"Why, a party with teams to buy hay and fodder for the horses and bring it to camp. He was uncertain whether to send out the party that night or to wait until the next morning. Finally, he concluded to send that night, and he ordered one of the captains to get ready a train of wagons and a troop of horses so as to start in half an hour. The general then went back into his tent. The captain did not move. One of the other officers asked him if he was not going to obey the command, and he said no. The other officer asked him why not. He said he did not think the general cared much about sending out that night, and so he was not going to do it."

"Miss Osborne," said Johnny, "that's pretty much what I told you about the whip. I said I did not think mother cared much about it."

"So you did," replied Mary Osborne. "Do you think it was a good excuse for the captain?"

"No," said Johnny. "What did the general do?"

"When he came out half an hour afterward, and found that nothing had been done, and heard the captain's excuse, he turned him out of the army and sent him home in disgrace."

"If I were a general," said Johnny, "I would not have a soldier in all my army that would not obey me."

"And if I were a soldier," said Mary Osborne, "I would always obey the orders of my general on the instant, whatever they were."

"So would I," said Johnny.

"And if I were a child," continued Mary Osborne, "I would obey my mother, and anybody else that had the charge of me, on the instant, and whatever they commanded me."

"Well," said Johnny, hesitating, "I mean to. At any rate I mean to obey *you* after this, whatever you tell me to do."

"Oh, no!" said Mary Osborne.

"I do, really," said Johnny.

"Oh, no!" repeated Mary Osborne. "You *think* you will now, but, when it comes to the point, you will disobey just as you did before."

"No," said Johnny, speaking very positively, "I am determined that, when it comes to the point, I will obey you."

"I suppose," rejoined Mary Osborne, "if it is something that you would as lief do as not, you will do it; but, if it is anything that you don't like to do, or if you are doing some-

thing else that you do not like to leave, then I am sure you will disobey me."

"No," said Johnny, "I am determined to obey you whether I like it or not. Try me."

How Mary Osborne tried him, and what was the result of the trial, will be seen in the next chapter.—"*Mary Osborne*," *by Jacob Abbott.*

A LETTER.

I have long wished to propose three questions for discussion in the Mothers' Council.

1. At what age should children be taken to church, and how should they be expected to behave while there?

2. This leads up to the question of Sabbath observance. A lady who allowed her children to play unrestrictedly on Sunday told me that, when she was a child, she hated to have Sunday come, and was determined that her children should not feel that way even if she made a mistake the other way. Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, on the other hand, who was taught to keep Sunday with Puritan strictness, declares that to her in earliest childhood it was the happiest day of the week, and she in her old age would have given anything to get back that feeling of sacred calm that she used to have on Sunday evenings. (I quote from memory, and do not claim to give her precise language.) Which of these methods is the best? Is the "true mean" something between the two?

3. What shall we give our children to eat? Shall we allow an unlimited diet of sweets? Shall we keep them in ignorance of the taste of sweet things or shall we allow a temperate use of them? If the last, what about the craving for "a little more" which is developed when only a tantalizing taste is allowed? What about the tendency to pilfer forbidden dainties when this craving is not gratified? I have known a mother who purposely left in constant sight and reach of the children dainties which they were forbidden to touch. Alas! they were not always proof against temptation, and the slightest peccadilloes of this kind were treated as crimes, the children being branded (figuratively) as thieves, and punished accordingly. Is it a better or worse method to keep forbidden "goodies" locked up out of sight and out of mind, and thus avoid all temptation? Or is it still better to put "left-overs" and broken bits of cake and pastry where the children can find them, and have it understood that to whatever is put upon a certain shelf or table they are at liberty to help themselves?

I give no opinion of my own concerning these problems, but offer them for the consideration of mothers, as the suggestions of

An Old Maid.

[The Editor invites readers of the *Cheerful Letter* to send short letters or articles on any of the subjects mentioned.]

NATURAL HISTORY.

MACK, THE PARROT.

IX.

Some one "doubts the truth" of my reports of Mack's sayings. It is, indeed, difficult for a man to believe that a bird cannot only talk, but that he can reason, to a certain extent. Perhaps it would be best for me to meet this criticism by admitting that Mack has, most decidedly, his limitations. For instance, there will be something on the table of which he would like a bit to eat; but not one word can he say that will help us to know what he wants. He will complain that he is neglected by saying, "Mackie!" in a pitiful tone, yet refuses everything until he gets the article desired. He is very fond of dry toast dipped in coffee, and, if I chance to take the first morsel myself instead of giving it to him, he will utter, in a tone of woe and reproach, "Oh!" as much as to say, "How could you do it?" I always feel reproved, and make due apology for my forgetfulness.

On being told not to talk, he said, as if it were a joke, "I *talk!*" and then, in an apologetic tone, "Oh, I forgot!" On my saying, "Mack, you must cultivate your memory," he replied in a *blasé* tone of voice, "I don't care about it."

As a young lady was telephoning to a friend, Mack interposed so vigorously that she said with firmness,—

"Mack, you must not talk when the telephone is going!"

This was Mack's saucy retort,—

"I'll talk as much as I want!"

I showed him, lately, a remarkably brilliant red rose, saying,—

"Mack, that is the color of the tips of your wings." To which he replied:—

"I *thought* it! I did not *know* what it was."

Mack's Cambridge friend, Mrs. T., was dining with us one day, and offered Mack a crust of Graham bread. He looked at it scornfully, and retired to the farther end of his perch. A few moments later he said:

"Walk right up, Mackie!" and took a bite from the crust. The lady declared afterwards that she had taken his words for her motto.

Mack's delight is to be out of doors whenever the weather permits. His way of asking to go out is a sort of prompting.

"Do you want to go out 'e door?"

Some times he says, "I want to gwout!" or "I want to gwin."

Seeing one of the neighbors passing by the house as he was hanging on the piazza, he called out:—

"I know *you!* Do you want to come in? I wish you *would!*"

Lately he has taken up the habit of saying, "What?" especially when we pay him some little compliment. He seems to pretend to be deaf, in order to make us repeat the words which make him so happy. The repetition is sure to give him keen pleasure.

It is pitiful to learn the fact that parrots are worth more money if they can swear! What a parody on human nature! Take our Mack, with his sensitiveness to every impression. What a sin to teach this beautiful and intelligent bird to blaspheme the name of his Maker! Fortunately, his bringing up was in a refined family, and he does justice to the lady who kept him by her in her sewing-room, and talked with him as she sat working, quiet and alone.—*H. M. Knowlton.*

A CAT STORY.

How a Kitten's Life was Saved.

Lying near me as I write is a huge cat, extraordinarily glossy and beautiful as to coat, and with pampered contentment and prosperity in the air with which he stretches himself and yawns. One could not imagine upon seeing him in his present sleek state that he had ever encountered anything in his sheltered life of eight years but perfect ease and happiness. And yet that life was nearly cut short in its very earliest days, indeed before his eyes were open. It is the family habit to bring the morsel of kittenhood selected to be kept, in the very first hours of its life, to what has been named the Day Nursery, which is a deep, comfortable basket, placed in a shady corner under a chair in a small room leading from the dining-room, and consequently where the family eye is pretty constantly upon it. This especial kitten, after about eight days of life, began to utter piercing cries whenever he heard a footstep near his basket. At first we thought only that his hearing was unusually acute, and that we disturbed him, but, finding that the cries continued, we broke through our rule of not handling the kittens for the first few weeks, and took him up to find that the little body was not keeping pace with the head in growth, and we came to the conclusion that the baby was starving. Evidently, the mother cat, for some reason, was not equal to the very slight task of bringing up one small kitten. Steps were taken at once to remedy such a state of things. A tiny bottle was chosen and filled with warm milk, and a new rubber top, meant for a penfiller, which by great good luck was in the house, was fitted over the top of the bottle, a hole punched in it, and the home-made nursing bottle was ready for use. How to apply it, and if it would work, were anxious questions, for, small as the rubber top was, it was large for the little mouth. The kitten was put on to the palm of a hand, held against the chest of the improvised mamma, and the experiment was tried. Nothing but desperation could have enabled him to get any milk at all. Sucking was out of the question, but he cleverly chewed and chewed at the top,—the bottle was tipped up to assist as much as possible,—till by slowest degrees the milk was lowered till the bottle was empty. This process, after the first few meals, was repeated six times, the six bottles—tiny ones— constituting a full meal, and during the day there were three of these. It was pathetic to see the little paws, feeble as blades of grass, instinctively wave in the air, feeling for the soft mother fur that ought to be there.

As time went on, the bottles were emptied much more quickly, but the number for one meal never exceeded the original six. It was a pretty sight to watch, for the kitten kept earnest eyes fixed on the dispenser of the meal in what was almost a disconcerting manner.

It became in a very small way one of the sights of the neighborhood, occasional friends dropping in to witness the performance, for the earnestness with which the little thing worked away was very laughable.

There came a day, after about four weeks of feeding in this way, when we were especially anxious that the baby should shine, for a friend particularly fond of cats was to come in the afternoon. So, to insure a successful exhibition, the noon meal was omitted, and the kitten was brought to the feast with presumably a hearty appetite. To our dismay, he turned his little head away, and would have none of it, and this in a very decided manner. Though himself microscopic in size, his will seemed to be full grown,—a characteristic he has kept to his later years, —and, though we invited him to partake in the wheedling manner common on such occasions, he still resolutely declined it Finally, as if out of patience with our im-

portunities, he seized the stopper in his teeth,—like needles for sharpness,—bit and tore at the rubber top, and finally jerked it from its hold on the bottle, a torn and tattered object, and cast it upon the floor. The baby had weaned himself!

A. B. S.

THE HOME OF SHAKESPEARE.

The record of my stay at Stratford might be called "The Story of a Happy Week." Before I begin the narration of my own experiences,—a subject always interesting to the narrator,—I am tempted to give an extract from Winter's little book, "Shakespeare's England," describing the little town and its surroundings. He says:—

"It is the everlasting glory of Stratford-upon-Avon that it was the birthplace of Shakespeare. Situated in the heart of Warwickshire, which has been called 'the garden of England,' it nestles cosily in an atmosphere of tranquil loveliness, and is surrounded, indeed, with everything that soft and gentle rural scenery can afford to soothe the mind and to nurture contentment. It stands upon a level plain, almost in the centre of the island, through which, between the low green hills that roll away on either side, the Avon flows downward to the Severn. The country in its neighborhood is under perfect cultivation, and for many miles around presents the appearance of a superbly appointed park. Portions of the land are devoted to crops and pasture; other portions are thickly wooded with oak, elm, willow, and chestnut; the meadows are intersected by hedges of the fragrant hawthorn, and the whole region smiles with flowers. Old manor-houses, half-hidden among the trees, and thatched cottages embowered with roses, are sprinkled through the surrounding landscape; and all the roads which converge upon this point—from Warwick, Banbury, Bidford, Alcester, Evesham, Worcester, and many other contiguous towns—wind, in sun and shadow, through a sod of green velvet, swept by the cool, sweet winds of the English summer. Such felicities of situation and such accessories of beauty, however, are not unusual in England; and Stratford, were it not hallowed by association, though it might always hold a place among the pleasant memories of the traveller, would not have become a shrine for the homage of the world. To Shakespeare it owes its renown; from Shakespeare it derives the bulk of its prosperity. To visit Stratford is to tread with affectionate veneration in the footsteps of the poet. To write about Stratford is to write about Shakespeare.

"More than three hundred years have passed since the birth of that colossal genius, and many changes must have occurred in his native town within that period. The Stratford of Shakespeare's time was built principally of timber,—as, indeed, it is now,—and contained about fourteen hundred inhabitants. To-day its population numbers upwards of eight thousand. New dwellings have arisen where once were fields of wheat, glorious with the shimmering lustre of the scarlet poppy. The older buildings, for the most part, have been demolished or altered. Manufactures, chiefly of beer and of Shakespearian relics, have been stimulated into prosperous activity. The Avon has been spanned by a new bridge of iron. The village streets have been levelled, swept, rolled, and garnished, till they look like a Flemish drawing of the Middle Ages. Even the Shakespeare cottage, the ancient Tudor house in High Street, and the two old churches—authentic and splendid memorials of a distant and storied past—have been 'restored.' If the poet could walk again through his accustomed haunts, though he would see the same smiling country round about, and hear, as of old, the ripple of the Avon murmuring in its summer sleep, his eyes would rest on but few objects that once he knew. Yet there are the paths that Shakespeare often trod; there stands the house in which he was born; there is the school in which he was taught; there is the cottage in which he wooed his sweetheart; there are the traces and relics of the mansion in which he died; and there is the church that keeps his dust, so consecrated to the reverence of mankind

'That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.'

"In shape the town of Stratford somewhat resembles a large cross, which is formed by High Street, running nearly north and south, and Bridge Street, running nearly east and west. From these, which are main avenues, radiate many and devious branches. A few of the streets are broad and straight, but many of them are narrow and circuitous. High and Bridge Streets intersect each other at the centre of the town, and here stands the market cross, an old building, with belfry-tower and illuminated clock, facing eastward toward the old stone bridge, with fourteen arches—the bridge that Sir Hugh Clopton built across the Avon in the reign of Henry VII. From that central point a few steps will bring the traveller to the birth-

place of Shakespeare. It is a little, two-story cottage of timber and plaster, on the north side of Henley Street, in the western part of the town. It must have been, in its pristine days, finer than most of the dwellings in its neighborhood. The one-story house, with attic windows, was the almost invariable fashion of building, in all English country towns, till the seventeenth century. This cottage, besides its two stories, had dormer-windows above its roof, a pent-house over its door, and altogether was built and appointed in a manner both luxurious and substantial. Its age is unknown; but the history of Stratford reaches back to a period three hundred years antecedent to William the Conqueror, and fancy, therefore, is allowed the amplest room to magnify its antiquity. It was bought, or at all events occupied, by Shakespeare's father in 1555, and in it he resided till his death, in 1601, when it descended by inheritance to the poet. Such is the substance of the somewhat complex documentary evidence and of the emphatic tradition which consecrate this cottage as the house in which Shakespeare was born. The point has never been absolutely settled. John Shakespeare, the father, in 1564 was the owner not only of the house in Henley Street, but of another in Greenhill Street, and of still another at Ingon, about a mile and a half from Stratford, on the road to Warwick. William Shakespeare might have been born at either of these dwellings. Tradition, however, has sanctified the Henley Street cottage; and this, accordingly, as Shakespeare's cradle will doubtless be piously guarded to a late posterity.

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

To her Brother, James Freeman Clarke.

NEWTON, Nov. 17, 1839.

My dear James,—I do not know that you or Anna have done anything that I should not write to you except that you have omitted to write to me at all since you returned to Louisville, and I did not know that you cared to be interrupted by any foreign intercourse. But, if you really want my letters, you shall have them. You dexterously turn the accusation against me that I have a right to bring against you, and thus withdraw yourself from the difficulty in which you ought to stand. Besides, there is a difficulty in my mind now about writing to you. I do not know whether I am writing to one person or two, or to

"a double cherry, seeming parted," etc.

How is it? Must I write a letter to you and one to Anna, or shall I take you as one literally? Expound me that difficulty when you next write, and do not put the answer in Greek, if you please.

I gave your letter to Mr. Ripley, and he desired me to tell you that he wished you to translate "Theodore"* at once, and send him on. The Translations sell well, he declares, and begs you to do it at once.

The Counsellor came here this afternoon, and told us, much to our surprise, that our income had ceased—even before it had begun. By his advice the School Street property was turned into Lowell Factory Stock, payable in dividends monthly, and he assured us we should have ten per cent. for our money. He was so sure of this that he invested all ——'s money in the same way, and that of Aunt ——, too. So that the whole family is in a destitute condition for six months or a year to come. But Grandmother has lent to the —— firm and to S. nearly all the money that the Vine Street house sold for; and they must now repay her back according to her needs and their means. I suppose they will be able to supply what is necessary till the dividends again appear. I was sorry to find that C. had written to you about it; but he did so under the mistaken impression that you had an unlimited command of pecuniary resources. I have undeceived him on that point. So I will beg you not feel uneasy about it, but, if we cannot do without your help, we will let you know.

I hope I shall be able to earn something for myself at last, and, if I do not succeed in it now, shall be much disappointed. The gold pieces came safely to my hand, and, if I may not thank —— for them, will tell you that they came very opportunely for me. I had sent to London for some colors, and do not know exactly how much I shall have to pay for them, and shall be glad to have money ready when they arrive. Also this class of Margaret's I thought best to join on many accounts, both for my own pleasure and that I wished to further her plans as far as I could, with so slight an expenditure as ten dollars.

It has succeeded admirably. Margaret excites my admiration and respect now more than ever before. She has managed this matter with so much courage, ability, self-possession, and grace as to astonish me all the time. She had about twenty-five ladies to begin with, who all and each declared they should not speak a word. Accordingly, the first day she took the conversa-

*"Theodore, or the Sceptic's Conversion," by de Wette.

tion into her own hands and explained to them her wishes and intentions in so animating a manner that they turned about and declared that it would be base in the extreme not to be willing to do all they could, while she so generously did her part. The subject for the first day was the Grecian Mythology, and about half the company joined in the conversation, to which half I had not the honor to belong. Miss Lucy Goddard is a member of the class. They took a cursory survey of the gods and goddesses, and fixed upon Apollo as a subject for the next time. There had been some fears expressed about town that it was a kind of infidel association, as several noted Transcendentalists were engaged in it; and, would you believe it, on this first opening of the subject the conversation once or twice came into a comparison of the religious privileges of the Greeks and our own. Margaret exerted herself very much to keep it off that track, seeing that it would lead to endless theological discussions, and I hope has put a stop to it.

I had Emma with me two days, and find her much improved. I think her father and mother will not regret having sent her here. I am very glad that she is again under Margaret's care, for, though Miss ——'s school is good, that is better. Her attachment for Ellen F. has something romantic in it. She loves her so much that she cannot bear to be away from her, and Ellen the same It is a harmony of contrast.

Grandmother desires you will take no notice of what —— said to you. She desires her love to Anna, and says that, if she had sent her a pin, it should have been a better one than that, but that Mrs. —— made a mistake. It was for you, and was already yours, one which you left here.

Truly yours,

SARAH A. CLARKE.

THE HOUSEHOLD.

A LADY'S ACCOUNT BOOKS.

Do you see that shabby little pocket memorandum book with blue cover and pencil tuck, on the hanging shelf with the smart octavos in Russia leather? That is a little girl's first account book, given with her first whole dollar to spend, by her father, when she was seven years old. You will find every penny of it set down scrupulously in the shaky handwriting,—ten cents for writing paper, five cents' worth of liquorice, three cents postage,—it was just after the ten-cent postage for every letter was abolished,—eight cents' worth of zephyr wool, one cent for lozenges, five cents to a younger sister—ah, how many things that dollar bought! It lasted the greater part of a year for spending money I believe, till she was promoted to an allowance of five cents a week, which you will find faithfully set down each Saturday.

But it was long ago, and the slim young lady account book next it in blue morocco has two or three stories of foolish expense to tell. But they went down in black and white, and did this good, that one day the owner sat down and counted up all the useless sums spent in a year, and at the head of the next page you see written the solemn injunction: "No more confectionery, no newspapers, no nuts, no photographs"; for in these trifles enough had been frittered away to buy the silk dress which was desirable for evening wear, and which could not possibly be afforded when it was most needed. The poor little student had felt that five dollars a year was more than she could afford to pay as subscription to a good library, yet in two years she had spent for occasional magazines and weeklies over twelve dollars, when the library would have given her the reading of all the home and foreign magazines and a hundred newspapers, with all the books she wanted beside.

It was a faithful lesson which the blue account book read to her, and, when she went to housekeeping on a limited income, the first thing bought was a family account book, which did more, she says, to keep down expense than anything in the world. One can't go on spending needlessly with the record and balance of loss staring her in the face every day and week. Her New Year gift some time ago was a set of housekeeping books, in small octavo, bound in dark red leather to match, and a pretty show they make,—Inventory, Personal Expense, Day book and Ledger,—they are the handsomest volumes in the bookcase, and placed among poets and birthday books.—*Mrs. S. D. Power, "Anna Maria's Housekeeping."*

Do the best thou knowest to-day. Shrink not from frequent error in this gradual, fragmentary state. Follow thy light as much as it will shew thee; be faithful as far as thou canst, in hope that faith will presently lead to sight. Help others without blaming their need of thy help. Love much and be forgiven.—*Margaret Fuller.*

Gather from every growth of life its seed of thought; look behind every symbol for its law; if thou canst see clearly, the rest will follow.—*Margaret Fuller.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, Canton Corner, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

CONNECTED TRIANGLES.

I. Upper Triangle: 1. To cry like a sheep. 2. To incline. 3. To take food. 4. An article. 5. A consonant.

II. Middle Triangle: 1. Distinguished. 2. A color. 3. To corrode. 4. A common article. 5. In tea.

III. Lower Triangle: 1. A piece of wood nailed down to secure something from slipping. 2. A sum of money lent at interest. 3. To consume. 4. A common little word. 5. A consonant.

II.

WORD PUZZLE.

A word of six (6) letters is used in each blank. The same letters must be used each time, but the words are different.

"A — sat in his — gray,
Watching the — of moonbeams play
On a keg which in the bushes lay,
And this is the song he sang:
Thou — the weak,
Thou — the strong,
The — of battles to thee belongs."

—*Selected.*

III.

HEROES AND HEROINES.

In what books do they figure?

1. Uncas.
2. Jeanie Deans.
3. Mr. Samuel Pickwick.
4. Lucy Deane
5. Paul Langford
6. Janet.

IV.

AN ACROSTIC.

All of the words described contain the same number of letters. When rightly guessed and written, one below the other, the diagonal beginning with the upper left-hand letter and ending with the lower right-hand letter will spell the name of a Russian general:—

1. A novel by Sir Walter Scott.
2. A famous art museum of Paris.
3. A city in Pennsylvania.
4. The residence of Sir Walter Scott.
5. To defeat of expectation.
6. A legislative body.
7. A city in Ohio.
8. A city in Rhode Island.
9. An acute infectious disease.
10. A President of the United States.

Answers to Puzzles in the May Number.

I. ENIGMA.—April showers bring forth May flowers.

II. A CURIOUS GARDEN.—1. Rose. 2. Solomon's Seal. 3. Flags. 4. Wandering Jew. 5. Hops. 6. Marshmallows and Buttercups. 7. A Ragged Robin. 8. Bachelor Buttons.

III. A DIAMOND PUZZLE.—

```
    G
  D O E
G O I N G
  E N D
    G
```

IV. SOBRIQUETS.—1. George Washington. 2. Benjamin Franklin. 3. Francis Marion. 4. Governor Jonathan Trumbull. 5. Anthony Wayne.

V. BEHEADINGS.—1. Send—End. 2. Bright—Right. 3. Cold—Old. 4. Stable—Table. 5. Grace—Race.

Those who send reading matter to the soldiers in the Philippine Islands are reminded that *current* periodicals and good, bright, standard novels are the kind of reading desired. Do not send *old* magazines, nor periodicals adapted especially for women. Numbers of periodicals issued within a year may be sent.

Please send subscriptions to the Treasurer, not to the Editor.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who received a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe St., Quincy, Mass.

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado).

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

Headquarters of the Cheerful Letter Exchange are at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. The secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, may be found there on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

There will be no monthly meetings of the Cheerful Letter Exchange during the summer months. Notice will be given of the first meeting held in the autumn.

HEREAFTER, ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS, INTENDED FOR THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, "CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, 25 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MASS." THIS INCLUDES SUBSCRIPTIONS, CHANGES OF ADDRESS, REQUESTS FOR DISCONTINUANCE, BEGGING LETTERS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OR BRANCHES.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange is developing Home Study work for the benefit of those without school facilities.

Arrangements will be made for lessons by correspondence in any school subject for those who are unable to leave their homes or who are far from centres of education.

Will those who would like to receive such instruction please send requests to Mrs. L. B. Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

The Editor asks POSTMASTERS who send notices of changes of address not to send these notices to the Editor, but to the Secretary, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Send requests for books and letters of thanks to the Book Club Secretary.

Hereafter, subscriptions to *The Cheerful Letter* should be sent to the secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Make checks payable to Lily Blunt Porter.

Chairman, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.

Secretary, Mrs. Lily Blunt Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Editor of "The Cheerful Letter," Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.